

§ 54.5 Religious character and independence.

A religious organization that participates in an applicable program will retain its independence from Federal, State, and local governments and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice and expression of its religious beliefs. The organization may not expend funds that it receives directly from SAMHSA or the relevant State or local government to support any inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization. Among other things, faith-based organizations may use space in their facilities to provide services supported by applicable programs, without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other symbols. In addition, a SAMHSA-funded religious organization retains the authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents.

§ 54.6 Employment practices.

(a) The participation of a religious organization in, or its receipt of funds from, an applicable program does not affect that organization's exemption provided under 42 U.S.C. 2000e-1 regarding employment practices.

(b) To the extent that 42 U.S.C. 300x-57(a)(2) or 42 U.S.C. 290cc-33(a)(2) precludes a program participant from employing individuals of a particular religion to perform work connected with the carrying on of its activities, those provisions do not apply if such program participant is a religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society and can demonstrate that its religious exercise would be substantially burdened by application of these religious nondiscrimination requirements to its employment practices in the program or activity at issue. In order to make this demonstration, the program participant must certify: that it sincerely believes that employing individuals of a particular religion is important to the definition and maintenance of its religious identity, autonomy, and/or communal religious exer-

cise; that it makes employment decisions on a religious basis in analogous programs; that the grant would materially affect its ability to provide the type of services in question; and that providing the services in question is expressive of its values or mission. The organization must maintain documentation to support these determinations and must make such documentation available to SAMHSA upon request.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to modify or affect any State law or regulation that relates to discrimination in employment.

(d) The phrases "with respect to the employment," "individuals of a particular religion," and "religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society" shall have the same meaning as those terms have under section 702 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e-1(a).

§ 54.7 Nondiscrimination requirement.

A religious organization that is a program participant shall not, in providing program services or engaging in outreach activities under applicable programs, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion, a religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to actively participate in a religious practice.

§ 54.8 Right to services from an alternative provider.

(a) *General requirements.* If an otherwise eligible program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary objects to the religious character of a program participant, within a reasonable period of time after the date of such objection, such program beneficiary shall have rights to notice, referral, and alternative services, as outlined in paragraphs (b) through (d) of this section.

(b) *Notice.* Program participants that refer an individual to alternative service providers, and the State government that administers the applicable programs, shall ensure that notice of the individual's right to services from an alternative provider is provided to

all program beneficiaries or prospective beneficiaries. The notice must clearly articulate the program beneficiary's right to a referral and to services that reasonably meet the requirements of timeliness, capacity, accessibility, and equivalency as discussed in this section. A model notice is set out in appendix A to part 54a.

(c) *Referral to an alternative provider.* If a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary objects to the religious character of a program participant that is a religious organization, that participating religious organization shall, within a reasonable time after the date of such objection, refer such individual to an alternative provider. The State shall have a system in place to ensure that referrals are made to an alternative provider. That system shall ensure that the following occurs:

(1) The religious organization that is a program participant shall, within a reasonable time after the date of such objection, refer the beneficiary to an alternative provider;

(2) In making such referral, the program participant shall consider any list that the State or local government makes available to entities in the geographic area that provide program services, which may include utilizing any treatment locator system developed by SAMHSA;

(3) All referrals shall be made in a manner consistent with all applicable confidentiality laws, including, but not limited to, 42 CFR Part 2 ("Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Patient Records");

(4) Upon referring a program beneficiary to an alternative provider, the program participant shall notify the State or responsible unit of government of such referral; and

(5) The program participant shall ensure that the program beneficiary makes contact with the alternative provider to which he or she is referred.

(d) *Provision and funding of alternative services.* If an otherwise eligible applicant or recipient objects to the religious character of a SAMHSA-funded service provider, the recipient is entitled to receive services from an alternative provider. In such cases, the State or local agency must provide the

individual with alternative services within a reasonable period of time, as defined by the State agency. That alternative provider must be reasonably accessible and have the capacity to provide comparable services to the individual. Such services shall have a value that is not less than the value of the services that the individual would have received from the program participant to which the individual had such objection, as defined by the State agency. The alternative provider need not be a secular organization. It must simply be a provider to which the recipient has no religious objection. States may define and apply the terms "reasonably accessible," "a reasonable period of time," "comparable," "capacity," and "value that is not less than." The appropriate State or local governments that administer SAMHSA-funded programs shall ensure that notice of their right to alternative services is provided to applicants or recipients. The notice must clearly articulate the recipient's right to a referral and to services that reasonably meet the timeliness, capacity, accessibility, and equivalency requirements discussed above.

(e) *PATH annual report.* As part of the annual report to SAMHSA, PATH grantees shall include a description of the activities the grantee has taken to comply with 42 CFR part 54.

§ 54.9 Assurances and State oversight of the Charitable Choice requirements.

In order to ensure that States receiving grant funding under the SAPT block grant and PATH formula grant programs comply with the SAMHSA Charitable Choice provisions and provide oversight of religious organizations that provide substance abuse services under such programs, States are required as part of their applications for funding to certify that they will comply with all of the requirements of such provisions and the implementing regulations under this part, and that they will provide such oversight of religious organizations.

§ 54.10 Fiscal accountability.

(a) Religious organizations that receive applicable program funds for substance abuse services are subject to the